

**SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND
IDEALS OF PEACE OFFICERS ME-
MORIAL DAY**

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 291, a resolution that commemorates and observes Peace Officers' Memorial Day, which honors law enforcement officers and those killed or disabled in the line of duty.

Law enforcement officers risk their lives daily to protect the citizens of this Nation and sadly 143 law enforcement officers were killed in the line of duty in 2006. Next week, thousands of law enforcement officers will come to Washington, DC, to pay their respects to their fallen fellow officers at the National Law Enforcement Memorial. As a former police officer, I also pay tribute to law enforcement officials who died in the line of duty in 2006 and continue to honor those police officers who made the ultimate sacrifice.

As a proud member of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus, I strongly support critical funding for programs, such as the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, to hire additional police officers and help law enforcement acquire the latest crime-fighting technologies. I will continue to be a strong supporter of the law enforcement community and will advocate on behalf of public safety in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, in honor of our courageous law enforcement officers, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and paying respect to our valiant heroes. As a proud cosponsor of H. Res. 291, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

**INTRODUCTION OF THE POLAR
BEAR PROTECTION ACT**

HON. JAY INSLEE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will close the polar bear loophole and prohibit U.S. citizens from bringing sport hunted polar bear trophies from Canada into the United States. I call on my colleagues to support the Polar Bear Protection Act, which if passed, will help conserve and protect one of the most beloved American icon species by discouraging U.S. citizens from contributing to their decline through sport hunting.

The Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 established a moratorium on the importation of marine mammals and marine mammal products, including the importation of all sport hunted marine mammals such as seals, walrus and polar bears. But in 1994, Congress enacted an exemption to this ban and allowed American sport hunters to bring home polar bear trophies from Canada for their personal use. There is no other such exemption in the Marine Mammal Protection Act. This exemption has had the effect of increasing Canadian polar bear deaths by U.S. sport hunters.

In 1994 the polar bears' survival was not known to be at risk. Today, we know their future is precarious. Polar bear populations are facing threats previously unprecedented in the history in the Arctic. The polar bear is dependent on sea ice for survival—it relies on the ice for hunting, breeding and rearing its young. Yet as a result of climate change, Arctic sea ice is receding at a rate even a non-scientist can observe, rapidly enough for polar bears to feel the impacts. An unknown number of these magnificent creatures—which can swim at least 50 miles—have drowned and are starving. Populations are changing their distribution, bringing them closer to human villages and exposing them to greater risk of negative interactions with people as they desperately search for food. Leading scientists project that the Arctic may be completely free of sea ice in the summer as early as 2040. This has disastrous implications for polar bears.

In July 2005, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Polar Bear Specialist Group (PBSG) released its quadrennial report, which reviewed the status of polar bears. Although the world population estimate remains at 21,500–25,000, in fact many populations are “data deficient,” due to the difficulties of studying this species in its remote, harsh habitat. At least some populations are declining and more may be. The IUCN PBSG concluded that the species should be upgraded from “a species of least concern” to “vulnerable,” based on the “likelihood of an overall decline in the size of the total population of more than 30 percent within the next 35 to 50 years.” It further concluded that the principal cause of this decline is global warming, with pollution an additional negative influence. For the first time, they expressed a need for caution when determining hunting quotas.

The U.S. Department of the Interior has confirmed that warming temperatures and the receding of sea ice in the Arctic pose a threat to polar bears and has concluded that polar bears could be endangered within 45 years. Based on the threats posed to polar bears, the Interior Department proposed that polar bears be listed under the Endangered Species Act as “threatened” on December 27, 2006. As many of you know, I actively have supported the listing of polar bears on the Endangered Species List. I feel strongly that such a listing is vital to the bears' survival. I also feel strongly that sport hunting at this time is an additional unnecessary burden that these beleaguered bears can ill afford.

More than half of the world's polar bears are in Canada and most of these are in the territory of Nunavut. In 2005, Nunavut increased its polar bear hunt quotas by almost 30 percent without scientific basis, despite documented declines in some populations and the increased threats to polar bears from the effects of climate change. The increase was based on anecdotal accounts that more bears were seen near villages; however, this increase in sightings likely was the result of hungry bears being drawn to village dumps than an actual increase in bear numbers. As a result, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has expressed concerns with this increase in quotas. Indeed, I am concerned that the money generated by American trophy hunters in Nunavut was a motivating factor in this quota increase.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also acknowledges that at least five polar bear popu-

lations, of which four are hunted, have poor and/or inadequate information on population statistics. It admits that four populations are possibly being over-harvested, posing conservation challenges for the bear.

Some of my colleagues here today may have supported the polar bear trophy importation exemption in 1994. I recognize that the landscape was different then, when many polar bear populations appeared sound. However, circumstances have dramatically changed. Seventeen years ago it was inconceivable to think that we could envision a world without these magnificent animals. Now, in 2007, we are learning that polar bear extinction could become a reality. While long-term action clearly is required to address the significant environmental factors negatively affecting polar bear survival, immediate action can and must be taken to control direct human-caused mortality, including addressing the harmful effects of U.S. trophy hunting.

I hope you all agree that contributing to the mortality of these bears from unnecessary sport hunting is no longer justified. We need to eliminate the exemption that allows the importation of polar bear trophies into the United States. The Polar Bear Protection Act will further polar bear conservation at a time when these animals need it most. I urge my colleagues to join me by supporting this legislation, and I hope that the Natural Resources Committee will hold hearings on polar-bear conservation and this bill.

**PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 2237, PROVIDING FOR RE-
DEPLOYMENT OF UNITED
STATES ARMED FORCES AND
DEFENSE CONTRACTORS FROM
IRAQ; PROVIDING FOR CONSID-
ERATION OF H.R. 2206, U.S.
TROOP READINESS, VETERANS'
CARE, KATRINA RECOVERY, AND
IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007; AND PRO-
VIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF
H.R. 2207, AGRICULTURAL DIS-
ASTER ASSISTANCE AND WEST-
ERN STATES EMERGENCY UN-
FINISHED BUSINESS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007**

SPEECH OF

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this measure before us today because it provides a clearly needed change in course in Iraq. The President has placed roughly 160,000 of our troops in a highly vulnerable position—refereeing a civil war—while the various factions in Iraq have not made adequate progress toward reconciliation. The needed political reconciliation among these groups will not happen until we make it clear to the Iraqis that our occupation is coming to an end.

But our open-ended occupation of Iraq is not only not working; it's working against us. It undermines our fight against al-Qaeda and provides extremists a rallying point. We have every indication that al-Qaeda is resurgent in Pakistan, that bin Laden finds himself stronger